From: TS
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/16/02 7:08am
Subject: Use of the Microsoft's $1Billion offer

I am glad that the DOJ rejected Microsoft's offer to flood schools with their computers. I also believe they should be held liable for their monopolistic tendencies(I know, technically MS is not a 'monopoly', just like we are not at 'War' with the Taliban and Al Qaida).

Here are some proposals for remedies in the MS suit to reduce their current anti-trust liability:

Have Microsoft give the previously offered $1 Billion in equipment and software to the US government and the states to be used for computerized voting before the next presidential election. (remember IBM did all the scores and stats at the olympics, the next election should be simple compared to that and should not cost $1B)

Many states can not afford the equipment to change from punch card ballots machines to computerized voting. Everyone agrees(at least the intellectual people) that computerized voting will prevent situations like the FL butterfly ballot. Putting machines in a voting area for occasional use does not lead to the same market-share capture that would occur if schoold children were using the machines on a daily basis. (e.g. NCRs control of ATMs does not make people want to have an NCR machine at home)

Even better have them spend a few extra hundred million on a secure database that can be used for the national results and develop training for users. They could also computerize voting cards and provide for voting on the Internet (If the internet is secure enough to use your credit card, why not cast a vote on it). I realize that only 50% of the US currently has access to the internet but allowing Internet voting does not disenfranchise someone from using the old fashioned method of going to a polling location. Let's quit saying what we can't do and take action to prove we are the most technologically advance country in the world. (Many European countries already allow voting over the Internet so does that mean they are more democratic than we are because they make it easier for their citizens to vote).

If they have another $1Billion in hardware and software to share, they should send it to support the poor countries that we are fighting to clean up. Put some hardware and software on the ground to help the Afgan and Somali governments. I believe India has more MCP's than the US so we could hire them to work for these governments, leaving more American jobs open for Americans instead of green-card visitors.

Either solution can serve as a punishment for MS and save taxpayers a great deal of money. Both ideas help the US.

The last item that is needed with respect to MS oversight is that they need to be evaluated and audited in a manner similar to the automobile industry.

How safe is their software (like the Insurance Institutes crash tests) using typical consumer purchased solutions (i.e. based on average purchased computer hardware and software configurations, not MS

specialized configurations: what is the status of crash worthiness, crash frequency, severity of data loss during crash, theft prevention, unauthorized access when on the internet)?

How long does it take the computer to boot up or re-boot based on purchased configurations (something like evaluating a vehicle's gas mileage)?

With reference to Apple's Steve Job, imagine how long it takes to boot your computer. Multiply that effect times the number of computers and the number of times you have to re-boot. Multiply that times the average cost per hour of workers or free time of an individual and calculate the time and cost wasted sitting in front of a computer while waiting for it to re-boot. E.g. a one-minute re-boot times 50 million computers (rough estimate of the MS computer count) at 60 seconds per re-boot is the equivalent of 350,000 man-days or 100 man-years of lost time each day. Re-phrased, the US loses more than one average persons life in time each day waiting for MS computers to re-boot. We need to find a better way to use the time of over 400 people a year than sitting in front of a re-booting machine.

The goal of this evaluation would not be directed at punishing them but instead would be used to drive them to improve their performance in a way that benefits the US public since normal market place controls can not penetrate through their monopolistic characteristics. The evaluations should be done quarterly, they should be based on a few areas of concern (perhaps no more than the two items mentioned above) and like the auto-industry, failure to comply with goals that have been set can result in a penalty. For instance, set the re-boot goal to the current average time of all computers and if MS computers take longer than others start lowering their allotted time by 4% a year (60 second re-boot would need to be 57.5 after the first year).